DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 374 321 CE 067 264

TITLE	Principles of Good Practice for Institutions Providing Voluntary Education Programs on Military Installations. Military Installation Voluntary Education Review (MIVER).
INSTITUTION	American Council on Education, Washington, DC. Center for Adult Learning and Educational Credentials.
PUB DATE	5 Aug 94
NOTE	50p.; For related documents, see CE 067 262-263.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research/Technical (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Educational Assessment; *Educational Cooperation; *Educational Facilities; Educational Planning; *Educational Principles; *Educational Quality; *Military Service; Military Training; Postsecondary Education; Program Effectiveness
IDENTIFIERS	*Military Installation Voluntary Education Review

ABSTRACT

This volume was developed with a concern for maintaining both quality and access to education for military servicemembers participating in voluntary education programs. Ten principles offer guidelines for academic instruction providing education programs on military installations. The principles have the following objectives: to define the parameters of excellence; to dispel misunderstandings about the purpose, legitimacy, and worth of voluntary education programs conducted on U.S. military installations; to stimulate dialogue on how to strengthen and improve the quality of these programs and services; and to help programs evolve as part of the mainstream of adult and higher education. An overview provides a summary of each of the 10 principles. Each principle is then presented in this format: summary, rationale, and listing of subprinciples. The principles cover the following topics: mission statement; education program; personnel; program administration; student services; instructional resources; physical resources; financial resources; student assessment; and program evaluation. Three appendixes contain the following: the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges Principles and Criteria, 1995-1997; Statement on Awarding Credit for Extrainstitutional Learning; and Joint Statement on Transfer and Award of Academic Credit. (YLB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION

ED 374 321

Military Installation Voluntary Education Review (MIVER)

Principles of Good Practice

for

Institutions Providing Voluntary Education Programs on Military Installations

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

E N Swanston

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Center for Adult Learning
and Educational Credentials
One Dupont Circle, Suite 250
Washington, DC 20036-1193
202/939-9722 (voice)
202/775-8578 (fax)

CE067264

2

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Table of Contents

Foreword 3

Overview 5

Principle 1. Mission Statement 7
Principle 2. Education Program 9
Principle 3. Personnel 13
Principle 4. Program Administration 17
Principle 5. Student Services 21
Principle 6. Instructional Resources 25
Principle 7. Physical Resources 29
Principle 8. Financial Resources 31
Principle 9. Student Assessment 33
Principle 10. Program Evaluation 35

Appendix A 37
Appendix B 47
Appendix C 51

Foreword

The *Principles of Good Practice for Institutions Providing Voluntary Education Programs on Military Installations* and its companion volume, *Principles of Good Practice for Voluntary Education Programs on Military Installations*, are products of the 1991-1993 Military Installation Voluntary Education Review (MIVER) Project administered by the American Council on Education. The Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) coordinated the MIVER Project contract. The MIVER Governing Board, with representatives from the military services, academic institutions serving the military, and the accrediting community, approved these *Principles* after extensive coordination in academe and the military.

The *Principles* were developed with a concern for maintaining both quality and servicemember access to education. They are not "standards." They are intended to:

- help define the parameters of excellence;
- dispel misunderstandings about the purpose, legitimacy, and worth of voluntary education programs conducted on United States military installations;
- stimulate dialogue on how to strengthen and improve the quality of these programs and services; and,
- evolve as part of the mainstream of adult and higher education.

We trust that the *Principles* will contribute to improving all aspects of our voluntary education programs.

Otto J. Thomas
Chair, MIVER Governing Board
Deputy Director
Continuing, Adult,
and Postsecondary Education
Department of Defense Education Activity
The Pentagon
Washington, DC

Henry A. Spille
Vice President
American Council on Education
Director, Center for Adult
Learning and Educational
Credentials
One Dupont Circle
Washington, DC

August 5, 1994

Overview

Principle 1. Mission Statement

The institution providing voluntary education programs on a military installation has an educational mission statement that reflects sound adult education philosophy and goals and is clearly compatible with the installation Voluntary Education Program mission statement and objectives.

Principle 2. Education Program

Education programs and services provided on military installations are comparable in quality with those provided on the home campus, even if different in kind and method of instructional delivery.

Principle 3. Personnel

Qualified and dedicated faculty and other academic and student services professionals committed to serving servicemembers as adult learners are hired, supported, and provided professional development opportunities.

Principle 4. Program Administration

Administration of the program includes academic and student services and demonstrates effective and reliable management of human, fiscal, and learning resources.

Principle 5. Student Services

The policies, procedures, and practices of the institution supporting the Voluntary Education Program take into account the conditions and circumstances of servicemembers as adult learners and contribute to the success of those learners through appropriate student admissions, registration, assessment of prior learning, academic advisement, financial aid and other services.

Principle 6. Instructional Resources

There is a sufficient reservoir of relevant instructional resources available to the

instructor for teaching support and to the student for reference, research, and independent learning.

Principle 7. Physical Resources

Facilities and equipment are appropriate to support the programs and services offered.

Principle 8. Financial Resources

Financial resources are adequate and appropriately used to accomplish the mission and achieve program goals and objectives.

Principle 9. Student Assessment

The assessment of a student's learning is based on the achievement of comprehensive and specific learning outcomes.

Principle 10. Program Evaluation

Continuous and systematic program evaluation stimulate program improvement, enhance quality, and increase the likelihood of the achievement of program mission and objectives.

Principle 1. Mission Statement

The institution providing voluntary education programs on a military installation has an educational mission statement that reflects sound adult education philosophy and goals and is clearly compatible with the installation Voluntary Education Program mission statement and objectives.

Rationale

An academic institution providing voluntary education programs on military installations is as committed to the education of servicemembers as it is to its students who are not servicemembers. There are times when the needs of servicemember-students differ from those of the traditional students at the home campus. Academic programs and services rendered to the military installation are in consonance with *both* the home institution's mission and that of the installation.

Compatible mission statements unify the Voluntary Education Program and form a sound basis for an effective partnership. They ensure that the commitment to academic quality on the home campus, embodied in accreditation, self-improvement, and reputation, are vested in off-campus programs and services .

The Principles and Criteria of the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) have been accepted by the higher education community as appropriate guidelines for meeting the special needs of servicemembers as adult students. The adult education philosophy and goals of each academic institution providing voluntary education programs on military installations are compatible with *SOC Principles and Criteria.*

Subprinciples

1.1 Statements of missions and goals for programs and services offered on installations are congruent with, extend from, and are an integral part of the institutional mission.

1.2 The institutional and program mission statements are compatible with the mission statement of the installation and institutions are encouraged to adhere to the *Principles and Criteria of Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges* (see Appendix A).

1.3 Institutional and program mission statements and goals are reflected in program planning, goal setting, decision making, and policies.

1.4 Institutional and program mission statements and goals are included in the institution's catalog and program materials.

1.5 There are provisions for periodic review and revision, as necessary, of the institutional and program mission statements and goals to accommodate changes in program, installation program mission, and adult education philosophy and goals.

Principle 2. Education Program

Education programs and services provided on military installations are comparable in quality with those provided on the home campus, even if different in kind and method of instructional delivery.

Rationale

Institutions offering programs and services offered on installations must be responsive and innovative in meeting the needs of servicemembers whose duties and assignments make it difficult to meet traditional residency requirements and who need access to a variety of instructional delivery modes as well as recognition of extrainstitutional learning. At the same time, programs and services must be of high quality. Learning outcomes assessment becomes increasingly important to the maintenance of quality as programs and services accommodate the special capacities and needs of servicemembers.

Achievement is identified as the highest possible level of acquisition of intended learning outcomes in the context of program requirements and standards and the student's interests, abilities, and personal constraints. It further is demonstrated by related evidence such as course completion, goal attainment, improved learning efficiency, and degree completion. Achievement fosters personal development such as self-esteem, self-directedness, autonomy, and ability to formulate clear goals and strategies for reaching them.

Because the teaching-learning environment and the students are different from those of the typical resident on-campus program for younger students and because scheduling and modes of instructional delivery vary, there is sometimes a tendency to provide programs and services that are lax in terms of meeting learning outcome requirements. It is necessary to accommodate the special needs of the servicemember-student with creative scheduling and by flexible application of the full array of currently acceptable ways to deliver instruction to adult students, but these accommodations require that more, not less, attention be devoted to the students' achievement of intended learning outcomes.

Curriculum content is current. Instructional materials and bibliographical references are up-to-date. Credit awards for extrainstitutional learning are made on the basis of nationally accepted principles and standards, are determined by using valid and reliable assessment techniques, and do reflect expected course and program learning outcomes.

Student learning outcomes assessment becomes increasingly important to the maintenance of quality as programs and services accommodate the special needs of servicemembers. Flexibility in modes of instructional delivery, residency, and scheduling are practiced, but program and service quality is corroborated by assessing student acquisition of intended learning outcomes determined by the use of appropriate assessment techniques.

Subprinciples

2.1 Programs of study offered on military installations have clearly articulated learning outcomes which are expected of the student-learner in order to achieve successful completion.

2.2 Formulation and articulation of expected learning outcome include (a) the identification of the knowledge, skills, and competencies students need both to enter and successfully achieve completion; (b) the integration of prior and current institutional and extrainstitutional learning; and (c) strategies that enable students to complete them.

2.2 Degrees are appropriately named, following practices common to institutions of higher education in terms of both requirements and standards.

2.3 Undergraduate degree programs include a coherent general education program, a major or a concentration, and academic skills consistent with the institution's mission and designed to ensure both breadth and depth of knowledge and to facilitate intellectual inquiry.

2.4 Specialized programs include provisions for breadth of student learning as well as achievement of specific professional or occupational objectives.

2.5 The institution maintains appropriate course and/or competency prerequisites to ensure that students enrolled in each course can achieve the expected learning outcomes.

2.6 The institution has necessary assessment of developmental education skills (i.e., reading, writing, mathematics, computer literacy, study skills, etc.) needed by students to meet prerequisites for entry into undergraduate programs and to assist students in achieving success in college programs.

2.7 Curriculum and individual course content reflect the current body of knowledge in the subject area. Course references are primarily current but include the references to the subject area's recognized "classic" literature if such a body exists.

2.8 Instructional methodologies are appropriate to the curriculum content, the learning styles of students, and the achievement of expected learning outcomes.

2.9 The institution is encouraged to recognize, award, and apply credits for extrainstitutional learning in accordance with American Council on Education's *Statement on Awarding Credit for Extrainstitutional Learning* (Appendix B) and the prior learning assessment principles promulgated by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning.

2.10 The institution integrates credits awarded on the basis of extrainstitutional learning (for example, credit by examination, credit for military learning, and credit based on portfolio evaluation) into degree programs using well-established and widely recognized protocols.

2.11 The institutional administrators and faculty encourage degree completions for students through assessment and award of credit for extrainstitutional learning, student agreements (contracts for degrees), course scheduling and sequencing, transcripting of credits, and academic advisement.

2.12 The institution designs its transfer of credit policies and practices for students to minimize loss of credit and avoid duplication of coursework by following the general principles outlined in the *Joint Statement on Transfer and Award of Academic Credit* as approved by the American Council on Education and the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, and affirmed by the Council on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation (Appendix C).

2.13 The institution limits its academic residency requirement for undergraduate degree programs and does not have any "final year" or "final semester" residency for active duty servicemembers to accommodate the mobile nature of their military jobs.

2.14 Learning available through alternative delivery and demonstrated through assessment degree program options is comparable in terms of expected learning outcomes to that achieved through traditional classroom-based degree programs.

2.15 The institution ensures that all students in degree programs are knowledgeable of and can use computer applications that are appropriate to their programs of study.

2.16 Programs of study offered on or near the installation are compatible with the institutional mission, higher education standards, and recognized curricula.

2.17 Programs offered to servicemembers and their adult family members on the military installation are an acknowledged part of the institution's accreditation.

2.18 The institution serves as an active partner with the installation in the education program planning and operations processes.

2.19 The institution assists the installation in determining ways to meet identified educational needs of servicemembers and to improve the Voluntary Education Program operations, for the purpose of enhancing achievement of servicemembers' educational goals and objectives.

2.20 For programs that are offered both on-campus and on-installation, the institution gathers and analyzes appropriate data, especially that pertaining to the achievement of expected learning outcomes, to ensure program comparability.

Principle 3. Personnel

Qualified and dedicated faculty and other academic and student services professionals committed to serving servicemembers as adult learners are hired, supported, and provided professional development opportunities.

Rationale

Faculty, site directors, and other academic professionals have appropriate qualifications for their positions. They are motivated to contribute to the educational development of servicemembers. Though academic professionals serve a wide variety of administrative and housekeeping tasks, they first and foremost think and perform as educators. Their own education and experience enable them to do this. Academic professionals need orientation and professional development to help them understand servicemembers as adult learners and perform their functions effectively.

Academic personnel have a commitment to adult education. In carrying out this commitment, they assist servicemembers as adult learners achieve educational excellence in the face of unique circumstances. They know what constitutes excellence in adult education, understand how to pursue it, and care about achieving it.

Faculty members are abreast of their academic fields and enjoy the normal intellectual intercourse of faculties. They are in tune with academic planning, decision making, and instruction and curriculum development on the home campus. Faculty represent wide and diverse academic backgrounds with a substantial proportion of degrees held by faculty members conferred by institutions other than the one where they teach.

The faculty provides the diverse learning experiences that respond to the characteristics and contexts of adult learners while meeting established academic standards. These learning experiences recognize the social environments, experiences, backgrounds, motivations, and learning styles of servicemember-adult students. Faculty employ a variety of instructional methods that include the use of technology to achieve learning goals. Hiring and retention of faculty address the need for diversity and for a rich learning environment.

Degrees are conferred by the institution, not its off-campus, on-installation branches. Colleges and universities must have the ability to impart the institutional imprimatur on their degree-seeking students. Institutions do this through their faculty and other academic professionals and their networking, through degree planning and achievement of expected learning outcomes, through student services and through their unique character. Adjunct faculty and part-time administrators contribute valuable subject matter expertise and short term operational capabilities. Nevertheless, it is important that the institution, itself, devote full-time academic professionals, where possible, to guide and teach off-campus offerings. Institutional personnel provide the academic nurturing essential for students in degree programs. The composition of and relationships among the personnel are critical to achieving the programmatic outcomes desired by the Voluntary Education Program on military installations, as is the institution's system of governance and decision-making.

Subprinciples

3.1 Academic professionals have the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and commitment required to teach, advise, counsel, and assist servicemember-students.

3.2 The institution employs faculty that have earned from accredited institutions the degrees appropriate to the level of instruction offered, minimizing the number of degrees from the institution providing the instruction.

3.3 The institution has a balance of some full-time and adjunct faculty teaching on the installation.

3.4 Adjunct faculty and part-time administrators are recognized and function as their full-time counterparts on the home campus.

3.5 Faculty teaching at the installation has a significant role in developing and evaluating the institution's educational programs.

3.6 Faculty is sufficiently diverse in backgrounds to provide students the needed learning experiences and role models important in achieving expected programmatic outcomes.

3.7 Institutional employment policies including compensation, teaching load, orientation, supervision, and professional development apply to faculty teaching on the installation.

3.8 Provisions exist for faculty serving installation programs to participate in the academic affairs of the institution, including curriculum development and governance.

3.9 The policies and procedures used to evaluate and recognize academic professionals on the installation are the same as those used on the home campus

3.10 Resumes of academic professionals are up-to-date and accurately reflect their past experience and education, and they are kept on file in accordance with personnel policies and practice.

3.11 Academic professionals and education services professionals at the installation communicate and network on a regular basis.

3.12 Professional development activities are provided for academic professionals and they avail themselves of these activities to keep professionally current and to facilitate communication, coordination and collaboration.

3.13 The faculty and staff on the installation reflect diversity in gender, race, and age.

Principle 4. Program Administration

Administration of the program includes academic and student services and demonstrates effective and reliable management of human, fiscal, and learning resources.

Rationale

Even though the administrative structure of programs on military installations varies, it is important that institutional programs be administered as *an education enterprise*. Regardless of structure, administrators provide leadership in developing and implementing policies and procedures to serve program participants, while remaining consistent with the general policies, procedures, and standards of the institution. Financial and other resources need to be sufficient to achieve the goals of the program. Particular attention is given to ensuring that proper library, media, laboratory, and computer support are available to students and faculty. The program's academic administration also provides recognized, acceptable, and equitable strategies for dealing with a broad range of issues, including hiring, training, and evaluating faculty; developing and evaluating curricula; assessing students' prior and current learning; and evaluating overall program effectiveness.

To administer the on-installation program, the institution needs a competent on-site educator-administrator who is also an effective manager with a strong focus on student service. Effective administration fosters coordination, collaboration and communication between academic professionals and student services personnel with the installation education center personnel. It provides a workable, collegial environment for developing, implementing and evaluating academic programs and services.

The administration of the on-installation program ensures that students are served appropriately. Serving them well requires that management attention focuses in large measure on program features such as admission, registration, degree completion, academic advisement, testing, financial aid, record keeping, course scheduling and sequencing, and integration of credit for military learning and testing into students' programs of study.

Institutional administrators understand and use appropriate information system management principles and procedures. Data collection and analysis are impor-

tant in program administration and decision-making. On-installation administrators collect and analyze data in partnership with the installation and with their home campus. The memorandum of understanding (MOU), Education Services Agreement (ESA), or contract clearly identifies all institutional management information requirements that are supplied to the installation, including data on student enrollments, agreements (contracts for degrees), and degree completions, as well as finances.

Subprinciples

4.1 The organization of the institution explicitly includes programs on military installations and establishes reporting lines.

4.2 The institution's on-installation administrator is a competent education professional with at least a bachelor's degree and proven management skills.

4.3 The institution delegates to the on-installation administrator those administrative functions needed to accomplish program mission and objectives that cannot be performed effectively at a distance by home campus administrators.

4.4 The institution provides a coherent administrative support structure for the on-installation program.

4.5 Resources are competently and efficiently applied to accomplish program objectives.

4.6 Appropriate management attention is paid to institutional functions and details such as course scheduling and sequencing, student registration, degree completion, academic advisement, testing, financial aid, record keeping, and integration of credit for military experience and testing into degree programs.

4.7 In areas of responsibility assigned by the institution, the on-installation administrator creates and maintains an environment of coordination, communication and collaboration among the staff, on-installation and institutional faculty and administrators and identifies opportunities for joint planning, coordination and collaboration between institution and installation education services personnel.

4.8 The on-installation administrator has the necessary computer support and uses that technology to facilitate information systems management.

4.9 Management information is collected and analyzed to determine effectiveness of the institutional program.

4.10 The institution and the installation are partners in the needs assessment process and in gathering and analyzing data.

4.11 The institution maintains accurate student academic records.

4.12 Institutions participate in developing and maintaining a common installation academic calendar and schedule of classes that accommodate the military duties of servicemembers, serve the academic programs they seek to complete, and avoid duplication.

4.13 At installations in the United States, a MOU/ESA is negotiated and agreed upon between the education services officer and the appropriate administrator of the institution providing education programs and services; it clearly states the responsibilities and obligations of the representatives of the institution and the installation.

Principle 5. Student Services

The policies, procedures, and practices of the institution supporting the Voluntary Education Program take into account the conditions and circumstances of servicemembers as adult learners and contribute to the success of those learners through appropriate student admissions, orientation, registration, assessment of prior learning, academic advisement, financial aid and other services.

Rationale

Student services assist each servicemember-student or adult family member-student in having a successful educational experience and in achieving educational goals. Counseling, admissions, testing, official assessment and award of credit for prior learning, transcripting of credit, financial aid, text book sales/rental, academic advisement, program completion, and graduation are relevant factors and indicators of program success. Institutional and installation personnel are partners in providing student services.

Institutions that outreach to servicemembers recognize their unique preparation and experience in the admissions process. Academic professionals facilitate admission and enrollment by determining levels of ability and achievement. Institutions have policies and procedures to recognize and award credit for learning acquired through specialized training and experience in the military services or elsewhere. These policies and procedures are applied as part of a comprehensive student assessment of prior learning. The credits that result from the assessment apply to students' degree programs, when they are appropriate for the program of study and degree requirements.

Academic advisors are technically qualified and professionally oriented to helping servicemembers as adult students. Academic advisement links with counseling services performed by education services professionals on the installation. Academic advisement includes degree completion strategies for the student. These strategies include independent study and testing options.

Appropriate and effective use of standardized tests supports the mission of the Voluntary Education Program and assists servicemembers in meeting their individual educational objectives. Testing results are used extensively in counseling, academic advisement, and placement. Tests routinely made available include not only diagnostic and placement instruments but also those used to award credit for prior learning.

Subprinciples

5.1 Institutional policies and practices for servicemembers regarding admission, assessment and award of credit for prior learning, and transcripting of credit are consistent with the institution's mission and nationally-recognized standards and practices.

5.2 The institution serving on an installation (a) recognizes the GED high school equivalency credential as evidence of high school completion, (b) publicizes alternative admission procedures available to servicemembers, (c) waives formal admission requirements for matriculation of servicemembers seeking enrollment in course work for transfer to another institution, (d) accepts and records previously successful postsecondary study as part of the student's program requirements, if appropriate, (e) conducts a timely and thorough assessment of all prior learning, and (f) completes student agreements or contracts for degrees for all degree-seeking servicemembers.

5.3 The institution maintains direct positive linkage with installation education services professionals on matters of academic advisement and other student services.

5.4 The institution provides readily available academic advisement to each student regarding his/her course work and degree completion.

5.5 The institution establishes and maintains official student records in a timely manner.

5.6 Registrations and textbook sales/rentals are convenient for the students in terms of location and time and preferably are available on the installation.

5.7 The institution provides financial aid assistance to all students and actively encourages participation in programs such as the GI Bill, Pell Grants, state grants, and institutional scholarships that may be available.

5.8 Financial aid applications are processed in a timely manner.

5.9 Degree plans are developed and maintained in a timely manner.

5.10 The institution applies transcripted credit towards specific certificate or degree requirements, as appropriate.

5.11 The institution has a clearly articulated policy for using standardized tests such as the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) General and Subject examinations, American College Testing Proficiency Examination Program (ACT/PEP), and DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSSTs) and is encouraged to award college credit and integrate that credit into degree planning and degree completion strategies consistent with the *Principles and Criteria of Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges.*

5.12 The institution's MOU/ESA with the installation includes the institutional policy on educational testing and how test results are integrated into degree planning and degree completion strategies and how the institution awards credit and establishes test cut-off scores; the institution is encouraged to use the American Council on Education's recommendations found in ACE's *Guide to Educational Credit by Examination* and to advise students regarding these credits and how they can be applied.

5.13 Formal, well-organized graduation ceremonies involving institutional officials, military leaders, and families and friends of the graduates are fitting closures to successful degree completions and provide incentives for continued learning.

Principle 6. Instructional Resources

There is a sufficient reservoir of relevant instructional resources available to the instructor for teaching support and to the student for reference, research, and independent learning.

Rationale

The teaching/learning process evolves from the premise that appropriate instructional resources are both planned for and made available as needed throughout the process. Included in this resource base are library collections and services; access to instructional technologies and training in their use; and access/instruction to other computer-based resources. MOUs/ESAs clearly designate and/or assign responsibilities for both the institution and the installation in providing these resources.

Computers and other instructional technologies often enhance learning and offer a variety of options not provided in an instructor-oriented classroom. Advanced technologies permit students access to knowledge that would be unavailable to them if they had to rely solely on printed materials and information provided by the instructor.

Subprinciples

6.1 Instructional resources are a shared responsibility among the institution, the installation and other institutions serving on the installation.

6.2 The institution ensures that its faculty and students have the instructional resources requisite for its individual course offerings and degree programs, and they are informed about them and trained to use them.

6.3 Advanced academic degree programs require meaningful research.

6.4 Academic professionals develop cooperative relationships with the installation librarian and library staff who support the voluntary education program.

6.5 Responsibilities for providing instructional resources are identified in the MOU, ESA, or contract.

6.6 The faculty have well-established procedures for placing frequently used instructional materials on "reserve" in designated locations readily accessible to students.

6.7 The institution uses library technologies such as on-line computerized catalog systems and computer-based bibliographic and data files to make information and source documents readily available to students and faculty.

6.8 The on-campus library has written policies and procedures on services it provides and it periodically reviews and updates them in response to program changes and/or needs assessment outcomes.

6.9 The on-campus library provides on -installation students needed library services on request or the institution provides library services through other comparable means.

6.10 Provision of computer technology needed to support the Voluntary Education Program is a shared responsibility of the institution and the installation with the responsibilities clearly articulated in the MOU, ESA, or contract.

6.11 The institution ensures the availability to its students of adequate computer resources for the courses and programs it offers on the installation, as necessary for the achievement of expected learning outcomes.

6.12 The institution monitors and upgrades, when appropriate, computer hardware, software, and courseware for which it is responsible in order to facilitate student learning.

6.13 Audio-visual equipment is appropriate, well-maintained, and readily available to support classroom instruction and independent study.

6.14 The institution integrates available instructional technologies such as video, interactive video, and audio-graphic conferencing to enrich their programs of study.

6.15 The hours of operation of institutional-operated computer laboratories, libraries, learning centers and other instructional support facilities are tailored to accommodate student course assignments and study schedules, and these facilities are staffed with personnel capable of assisting students as needed.

Principle 7. Physical Resources

Facilities and equipment are appropriate to support the programs and services offered.

Rationale

Although the installation generally has primary responsibility for physical resources, the institution should take an active role in ensuring that they are adequate and well-suited for its program and services offered on the installation. The health, security, and safety of staff, faculty and students are important factors in program operations. Classrooms, laboratories and station equipment used for instruction and educational services must be conducive for learning and tailored, to the maximum extent possible, to the instruction and services being offered.

Subprinciples

7.1 The institution assists in pursuing the most appropriate facilities, furnishings, and equipment needed for teaching and learning and for the development of maintenance of a physical environment conductive for student achievement of expected learning outcomes.

7.2 Provision of adequate physical resources, as follows, is appropriately negotiated and addressed in the MOU/ESA/contract:

- Adequate classroom, laboratory, and administrative space;
- Classroom and laboratory space suited to course offerings and class schedules;
- Properly lighted, ventilated, temperature controlled and well-maintained classrooms and administrative offices;
- Well-maintained rest rooms available for student, faculty, and staff use;
- Adequate space available for the conduct of academic advisement;
- Appropriate space and equipment available for vocational-technical and other special purpose courses offered on the installation;
- Adequate auxiliary space, such as lounge and storage areas, available to meet program needs; and

- Facilities and special-purpose equipment available to faculty, students, and staff during non-duty and non-teaching hours to meet program needs.

7.3 All facilities and equipment meet standard fire, safety, security, and health considerations.

Principle 8. Financial Resources

Financial resources are adequate and appropriately used to accomplish the institutional mission and achieve program goals and objectives.

Rationale

Planning, budgeting, allocation, and accountability of financial resources are critical to program success. The institution's financial documents demonstrate the appropriate allocation and use of resources to support its educational programs. The institution's financial practices, records, and reports demonstrate fiscal viability of its operations.

Subprinciples

8.1 The institution's financial documents demonstrate the appropriate allocation and use of resources to support its educational programs on the installation.

8.2 The institution's financial practices, records, and reports demonstrate fiscal viability.

8.3 The institution analyzes costs of programs and services on the installation to ensure cost effectiveness.

8.4 As requested and appropriate, the institution that offers education programs on a military installation through a MOU/ESA provides financial information to the installation education services officer to help the installation appropriately monitor tuition and fee structures, staffing, and availability of instructional resources; the institution that offers education programs through a MOU/ESA on several military installations and does not maintain separate installation budgets provides appropriate aggregate financial information to the installation education services officer (and service education director) to help the installation and the military service appropriately monitor tuition and fee structures, staffing, and availability of instructional resources; and the institution operating under a contract through the competitive bidding process provide financial

information as stipulated in the contract.

8.5 The institution repays cost incentives provided by the installation in appropriate educational benefits to servicemembers.

8.6 The MOU/ESA or contract deals with fiscal arrangements and concerns between the installation and the institution to the extent practicable and appropriate.

8.7 The public institution, within its own state, charges in-state tuition for assigned active duty personnel and their adult family members as authorized by state law or policy.

Principle 9. Student Assessment

The assessment of a student's learning is based on the achievement of comprehensive and specific learning outcomes.

Rationale

The progress of students and their achievement of outcomes require assessment that has direct, personal links to the teaching-learning process. Because the assessment of learning is complex, programs use multiple methods of assessment including written and oral examinations, case study methods, interviews, portfolio and project review, and other means to determine that learning goals are achieved. Forms of assessment selected are appropriate for the particular learning experience and assist students in their learning.

Learners should be involved along with academic and education services professionals in identifying their learning outcomes and in assessing whether these outcomes are achieved in a satisfactory manner. The development of student self-assessment skills should be an integral part of the learning process and is critical to the growth of self-managing, autonomous, lifelong learners.

Subprinciples

9.1 Assessment is designed to be an integral and active part of each learning experience.

9.2 Student learning is evidenced by what the student knows and can do through demonstrations of knowledge and skill.

9.3 The assessment criteria, methods, techniques, or strategies are developed by faculty and other academic professionals on the basis of how effectively they might determine the extent to which the specific learning outcomes are achieved.

9.4 Assessment of student learning includes policies and procedures for assessing and recognizing extrainstitutional learning, as well as learning that takes place through instruction provided by the institution.

9.5 The institution monitors its faculty grade distribution practices to ensure that student grades accurately reflect the quality of work generated.

9.6 On-installation student assessment is an acknowledged part of the institutional accreditation process where possible.

9.7 Individual student assessment is an integral part of the general program evaluation plan and contributes to the accountability of the program.

Principle 10. Program Evaluation

Continuous and systematic program evaluation stimulate program improvement, enhance quality, and increase the likelihood of the achievement of program mission and objectives.

Rationale

The health and vitality of the education programs on military installations depend on critical and thorough reviews of the level of attainment of student learning outcomes and program effectiveness. Academic professionals and education services personnel should have a common understanding of what they believe constitutes a "successful" program. They maintain specific benchmarks to determine success.

Given the multi-dimensional nature of education programs and their objectives, program evaluation recognizes a wide variety of outcomes relevant to determining program effectiveness. These may include (a) student learning outcomes, (b) alumni outcomes, (c) faculty outcomes, (d) employer or military outcomes, (e) program outcomes, and (f) institutional outcomes.

Periodic evaluation ensures quality program offerings and services and suggests program modifications and new directions toward goals of excellence in adult education. On-installation programs should be included in the institutional accreditation process. Peer, self, and student evaluations should be parts of a functional faculty performance review process.

Subprinciples

10.1 Program evaluation is an on-going active partnership between the institution and the installation.

10.2 Academic professionals and education services personnel have a common understanding regarding what constitutes a "successful program" and have designed benchmarks to determine its achievement.

10.3 Effective program evaluation includes development of specific

measures and standards for assessing immediate, intermediate, and long-range results.

10.4 The institution uses the results of program evaluations to modify and improve the program.

10.5 On-installation program evaluation is an acknowledged part of the institutional accreditation process where possible.

10.6 Peer, self, and student evaluations are parts of a functional faculty performance review process.

10.7 The institution using intensive learning formats has a formalized, externally validated, evaluation program for measuring program effectiveness and comparability with traditional learning formats.

10.8 Academic professionals participate in developing and implementing a comprehensive installation Voluntary Education Program evaluation plan.

Appendix A

Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges Principles and Criteria 1995-1997

Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC), a consortium of national higher education associations, functions in cooperation with the Department of Defense (DoD), the Military Services including the National Guard, and the Coast Guard to help meet the voluntary higher education needs of servicemembers.

Hundreds of thousands of servicemembers, civilian employees of DoD, the Military Services including the National Guard, the Coast Guard, and family members enroll annually in programs offered by several hundred colleges, universities, and postsecondary occupational and technical institutions. These voluntary programs are a significant joint venture and require strong commitment and coordination among academic institutions and agencies, the Military Services including the National Guard, the Coast Guard, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD).

SOC is a vehicle to help coordinate voluntary postsecondary educational opportunities for servicemembers. SOC does this by

- seeking to stimulate and help the higher education community to understand and respond to special needs of servicemembers
- advocating the flexibility needed to improve access to and availability of educational programs for servicemembers
- helping the Military Services including the National Guard, and the Coast Guard understand the resources, limits, and requirements of higher education
- helping the higher education community understand the resources, limits, and requirements of the Military Services including the National Guard, and the Coast Guard

- seeking to strengthen liaison and working relationships among military and higher education representatives.

SOC PRINCIPLES

To achieve its goals, SOC is founded on principles agreed to collectively by the higher education community through the SOC Advisory Board, the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), the Military Services including the National Guard, and the Coast Guard.

SOC Principles are predicated upon such principles as those set forth in the *Joint Statement on Transfer and Award of Academic Credit* of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), the American Council on Education (ACE), and the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA), and affirmed by the Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation (CORPA), and are drawn principally from the cumulative experience of educational institutions and agencies judged successful in their work with servicemembers. The Principles embody a needed institutional flexibility with thoughtful development of programs and procedures appropriate to the needs of servicemembers, yet recognize the necessity to protect and assure the quality of educational programs.

Principle 1. In order to enhance their military effectiveness and to achieve their educational, vocational, and career goals, servicemembers should share in the postsecondary educational opportunities available to other citizens.

Principle 2. Educational programs for servicemembers should rely primarily on programs, courses, and services provided by appropriately accredited institutions and organizations, including high schools, postsecondary vocational and technical schools, colleges, and universities.

Principle 3. To enhance access to undergraduate educational opportunities for servicemembers, institutions should maintain a necessary flexibility of programs and procedures, particularly in admissions, credit transfer, and recognition of other applicable learning, including that gained in the military; in scheduling and format of courses; and in academic residency requirements to offset servicemembers' mobility, isolation from campuses, and part-time student status.

SOC INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Institutional members of SOC may be entire institutions or appropriate subdivisions (e.g., colleges, schools, or major divisions). To become an institutional member of SOC, an institution must meet three requirements:

- Each institution must satisfy six initial conditions.
- A responsible administrative official must commit the institution or the appropriate major subdivision to fully comply with and support the SOC Principles and Criteria as it delivers undergraduate postsecondary programs, courses, and supporting services to servicemembers on military installations or at locations accessible to them.
- The prospective institutional member must be approved as meeting SOC Principles and Criteria by the Director of SOC.

INITIAL CONDITIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Institutional members must meet the following conditions:

- be listed in the *hep Higher Education Directory*
- be a degree-granting institution that is accredited by an institutional accrediting agency recognized by CORPA
- meet appropriate provisions of DoD Directive 1322.8, *Voluntary Educational Programs for Military Personnel*, and appropriate Service regulations when providing educational services on military installations
- be approved for educational benefits by the appropriate State Approving Agency for veterans' benefits
- agree to submit data for the *SOC Guide*
- not be listed in the *Guaranteed Student Loan Data Book* as having excessive student loan default rates.

SOC CRITERIA

Inherent in the SOC Principles are expectations and standards essential to their translation into performance and action. The SOC Criteria express those expectations and standards and constitute an operational framework for SOC member institutions to extend to servicemembers undergraduate educational opportunities that are sometimes distinct from common institutional practice. The Criteria characterize flexibility essential to the improvement of access by servicemembers to undergraduate educational programs. The Criteria stipulate that institutional policies and practices be fair, equitable, and effective in recognizing special and often limiting conditions faced by military students.

Criterion 1. Transfer of Credit.

Since mobility makes it unlikely that a servicemember can complete all degree program requirements at one institution, a SOC institution designs its transfer practices for servicemembers to minimize loss of credit and avoid duplication of coursework, while simultaneously maintaining the integrity of its programs. Consistent with requirements of a servicemember's degree program, a SOC institution follows the general principles of good practice outlined in the *Joint Statement on Transfer and Award of Academic Credit* as approved by ACE and AACRAO, and affirmed by CORPA. Each institution may be required to submit documentary evidence that it generally accepts credits in transfer from other accredited institutions, and that its credits in turn are generally accepted by other accredited institutions.

Criterion 2. Academic Residency Requirements.

A SOC institution limits academic residency requirements for active-duty servicemembers to no more than 25 percent of the undergraduate degree program; recognizes all credit course work offered by the institution as applicable in satisfying academic residency requirements; and allows servicemembers to satisfy academic residency requirements with courses taken from the institution at any time during their program of study, specifically avoiding any "final year" or "final semester" residency requirement, subject to stated requirements in specific course areas such as majors. (Institutions joining SOC primarily for the purpose of participating in the Concurrent Admissions Program (ConAP) are exempted from this criterion.)

Criterion 3. Crediting Learning from Military Training and Experience.

A SOC institution provides processes to determine credit awards and learning acquired for specialized military training and occupational experience when applicable to a servicemember's degree program. A SOC institution recognizes and uses the ACE *Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services* in determining the value of learning acquired in military service, and awards credit for appropriate learning acquired in military service at levels consistent with ACE *Guide* recommendations and/or those transcripted by the Community College of the Air Force, when applicable to a servicemember's program.

Criterion 4. Crediting Extrainstitutional Learning.

Recognizing that learning occurs in extrainstitutional and non-instructional settings, a SOC institution provides processes to evaluate and awards appropriate undergraduate level credit for such learning through practices that reflect the principles and guidelines in the statement on *Awarding Credit for Extrainstitutional Learning* adopted by ACE and affirmed by CORPA. This shall include awarding credit through use of one or more of the nationally recognized, non-traditional learning testing programs provided for servicemembers by the OSD, such as described in the ACE *Guide to Educational Credit by Examination*. These examinations include CLEP, DSST, and ACT/PEP whether or not they supplement institutional challenge examinations or test-out procedures.

SOC INSTITUTIONAL OPERATING GUIDELINES

In addition to the SOC Criteria, some operating guidelines can be drawn from the SOC Principles and the experience of educational institutions and agencies that have shown success and quality in their educational offerings to servicemembers. These guidelines should be viewed as desired institutional behavior for SOC institutions.

Admissions. In recognition of the preparation and experience of many servicemembers, SOC institutions facilitate the admission and enrollment of qualified candidates by providing means to determine levels of ability and achievement of servicemembers. Admissions practices, developed primarily for recent high school graduates, often work to the disadvantage of a servicemember who may be qualified for college-level work, yet may be unable to satisfy commonly imposed requirements. Specialized training and experience in the Military Services or elsewhere, that may

qualify individuals for college admissions and credit, often go unrecognized.

To facilitate admission and enrollment of qualified servicemembers, SOC institutions

- recognize the GED high school equivalency certificate/diploma, utilizing ACE recommendations concerning academic performance
- accept and record previously successful postsecondary study as part of the servicemember's program requirements, if appropriate
- recognize learning gained from specialized training and experience in the Military Services or elsewhere
- establish competency by nationally recognized means, such as standardized tests
- publicize alternative admission procedures available to servicemembers
- conduct timely evaluation of the educational records and relevant experiences of servicemembers
- waive formal admission for servicemembers seeking enrollment in course work for transfer to another institution
- complete student agreements or learning contracts for all degree-seeking servicemembers.

Non-Traditional Learning. In recognition of the special needs of servicemembers, SOC institutions assist them to incorporate non-traditional instruction and study in the completion of a degree program. Since formal classwork needed to complete a degree program in certain curriculum areas may not be available at some military installations, SOC institutions should allow for such studies to be undertaken in a non-traditional mode. SOC institutions realize that it is often necessary to recognize independent study, either guided by a parent institution or self-directed, or non-traditional study from other sources.

Military occupational experience represents a legitimate area of learning outside the formal classrooms of specialized military training courses. A SOC institution realizes the potential value of such experiences and awards appropriate credit for

Military Occupational Skills (MOS) and Navy Rates and Ratings as recommended by the ACE *Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services*.

Learning may also be acquired through other experience, civilian non-collegiate courses, and collegiate non-traditional courses. Courses in the last group, including directed independent study, correspondence courses, TV-assisted courses, or courses-by-newspaper, have evaluative mechanisms vouched for by the operating institution. Credit recommendations for training courses offered by business and industry, government, labor unions, and other public and private sectors are given in the ACE *National Guide to Educational Credit for Training Programs,* and *A Guide to Educational Programs in Noncollegiate Organizations* by New York Regents.

The portfolio evaluation method, sponsored by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) and used in some form by hundreds of institutions, is also an important aid in determining credit equivalence and applicability of experiential learning.

Many accredited colleges and universities offer independent study opportunities to qualified students. DANTES provides a comprehensive listing of available independent study courses. Recent promising developments in computer-assisted and TV-assisted instructional programs, amply supported by print materials and institutionally monitored and evaluated, broaden the possibilities.

To enhance study opportunities for servicemembers, SOC institutions

- advise and assist servicemembers to make use of non-traditional or less formal study modes when formal course work needed for degree completion is unavailable

- provide their own modes of non-traditional instruction or, through advisement and listing in their publications, make students aware of acceptable forms of non-traditional instruction available through other sources, and

- consider the acceptance, when appropriate to a servicemember's program, of credit earned from other similarly accredited institutions through non-traditional sources (independent study, correspondence, television, computer-based, credit-by-examination, or portfolio).

Institutional Commitment. In order to achieve consistent application of policy in offering programs for servicemembers, SOC institutions make appropriate assignment of responsibility and monitor institutional performance in the delivery of such programs.

Programs for military students, whether offered on-campus or on an installation, require added institutional attention and supervision. Procedures that may have been effective for the usual campus or student population no longer suffice. The nature of the institutional commitment to servicemembers needs to be made clear to institutional representatives as well as to the student.

Demonstrating their understanding of and commitment to servicemembers, SOC institutions

- publicize widely to their faculty and students the nature of their commitment and programs and activities offered on behalf of servicemembers and include a statement of commitment to SOC in their catalogs
- provide effective administrative staffing and processes to give adequate support to programs for servicemembers
- develop procedural directives for instructors, counselors, admissions officials and program officers governing special requirements of servicemembers
- ensure the comparability of off-campus courses to on-campus, while recognizing and accommodating programs to the particular needs of the adult learner
- designate a contact office or person for servicemembers
- designate a senior administrative official to oversee programs for servicemembers and veterans, monitor institutional compliance with the SOC Criteria, and serve as principal spokesperson and respondent on SOC matters
- conduct staff orientation programs to prepare full-time and adjunct faculty to work with the adult part-time learner
- provide scheduling on a planned program basis rather than by individual courses

- ensure access to all courses needed for degree completion by scheduling at appropriate locations and times, not necessarily related to regular academic terms.

Veterans' Services. For veterans returning to civilian life to begin or continue study, civilian SOC institutions provide appropriate evaluation of their training, experience, and prior study and other services similar to that afforded servicemembers. Some of the SOC Criteria apply equally to the institution's treatment of veterans — admission practices, transfer of credit and recognition of other forms of learning, including military experience. When a servicemember has completed the residency requirement while on active duty at a SOC college, that college is obliged to recognize that fact when the servicemember becomes a veteran. Although broader instructional offerings and services may be available to returning veterans, counseling, evaluation, and planning are of particular importance in assisting them to reach their personal and career goals.

Recognizing the continuing educational needs of veterans, civilian SOC institutions

- encourage veterans to continue or complete study started during service or interrupted by duty requirements

- offer opportunities to veterans similar to those extended to servicemembers under the SOC Criteria, including provision of information and counseling services to ensure that veterans are aware of the benefits, regulations and potential problems of veterans' assistance programs

- comply with the provisions of *38 USC 1775* pertaining to veterans' educational assistance

- provide veterans, previously admitted as SOC students, with opportunities to complete their programs under the conditions of their student agreements.

Appendix B

Statement on Awarding Credit for Extrainstitutional Learning

The following statement by the ACE Commission on Educational Credit and Credentials has been approved by the ACE Board of Directors and affirmed by the Council on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation.

The American Council on Education recommends that postsecondary education institutions develop policies and procedures for measuring and awarding credit for learning attained outside their sponsorship.[1]

American society abounds in resources for learning at the postsecondary level. Public, private, and proprietary education institutions exercise the central but not exclusive responsibility for instruction and learning. Associations, business, government, industry, the military, and unions sponsor formal instruction. In addition, independent study and reading, work experiences, the mass media, and social interaction contribute to learning and competency.

Full and effective use of all educational resources is a worthy educational and social goal. Achieving this goal will depend to a large extent on providing equitable recognition for extrainstitutional learning:

- Educational credentials have a significant bearing on the economic, professional, and social status of the individual. Thus, social equity requires that equivalent learning, regardless of where and how it is achieved, be incorporated into the system of rewards for learning and competency.

- Recognition encourages learning and contributes to pedagogical effectiveness. Teaching students what they already know is both stultifying to them and wasteful of educational and personal resources.

Postsecondary education institutions legally authorized and accredited to award degrees and other educational credentials have a special responsibility to assess extrainstitutional learning as part of their credentialing function.

In the development of institutional policies and procedures, the American Council on Education recommends the following guidelines and resources.

Guidelines

1. Reliable and valid evaluation of student achievement is the sine qua non in awarding credit. Experience, whether acquired at work, in social settings, in the library, at home, or in the formal classroom, is in itself an inadequate basis for awarding credit. Increased attention in choosing evaluation procedures and techniques and more thorough evaluation are necessary when learning has been attained without participation in a program of study prescribed by an educational institution and offered by its faculty.

2. In determining whether it is appropriate to accept a student's extrainstitutional learning for credit, the governing considerations should be its applicability to the student's program of study, including graduation requirements, and the relationship of the learning to the institution's mission, curricula and standards for student achievement. Learning should be articulated, documented and measured in these terms.

3. Institutions should evaluate extrainstitutional learning only in subject-matter fields in which they have or can arrange for faculty expertise or where they can rely on nationally validated examinations or other procedures for establishing credit equivalencies. Institutions should award credit in these areas only if the quality of learning meets their standards for student achievement. Normally, institutions should evaluate learning and award credit only in subject fields in which they offer courses or curricula. However, if the acquisition of college level learning outcomes has been demonstrated in an area not taught by the institution, but related to the student's program of study, an exception may and ought to be made.

4. Institutions awarding credit for extrainstitutional learning should develop clearly stated policies regarding administrative responsibility, student eligibility, means of assessment, recording of results on transcripts, storage of documentation, student fees, and maximum number of credits allowable. Information on these and related institutional policies and procedures should be disseminated to students and faculty for maximum awareness and utilization.

5. Institutional policy should include provision that the institution's policies and procedures for awarding credit for extrainstitutional learning should be subject to periodic reevaluation.

Resources

1. *Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services,* published by the American Council on Education.

2. *The National Guide to Educational Credit for Training Programs,* published by the American Council on Education.

3. *Credentialing Educational Accomplishment,* edited by Jerry W. Miller and Olive Mills, published by the American Council on Education.

4. *Guide to Educational Credit by Examination,* published by the American Council on Education and available from the ACE Credit by Examination Program.

5. Publications of the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning, 223 W. Jackson Blvd., Suite 510, Chicago, IL 60606.

[1] "Extrainstitutional learning" is defined as learning that is attained outside the sponsorship of legally authorized and accredited postsecondary educational institutions. The term applies to learning acquired from work and life experiences, independent reading and study, the mass media, and participation in formal courses sponsored by associations, business, government, industry, the military, and unions.

Appendix C

Joint Statement on Transfer and Award of Academic Credit

Transfer and Award of Credit

The following set of guidelines was developed by the three national associations whose member institutions are directly involved in the transfer and award of academic credit--the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, the American Council on Education, and the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation and affirmed by the Council on Recognition of Postsecondary Education. The need for such a statement came from an awareness of the growing complexity of transfer policies and practices, which have been brought about, in part, by the changing contours of postsecondary education. With increasing frequency students are pursuing their education in a variety of institutional and extrainstitutional settings. Social equity and the intelligent use of resources require that validated learning be recognized wherever it takes place.

The statement is intended to serve as a guide for institutions developing or reviewing policies dealing with transfer and award of credit. The statement is under periodic review and reactions to it would, of course, be welcome. Comments may be directed to Henry Spille, Vice President, ACE, and Director, The Center for Adult Learning and Educational Credentials.

Robert H. Atwell, President

American Council on Education

This statement is directed to institutions of postsecondary education and others concerned with the transfer of academic credit among institutions and award of academic credit for extrainstitutional learning. Basic to this statement is the principle that each institution is responsible for determining its own policies and practices with regard to the transfer and award of credit. Institutions are encouraged to review their policies and practices periodically to assure that they accomplish the institutions' objectives and that they function in a manner that is fair and equitable to students. Any statements, this one or others referred to, should be used as guides, not as substitutes, for institutional policies and practices.

Transfer of credit is a concept that now involves transfer between dissimilar institutions and curricula and recognition of extrainstitutional learning, as well as transfer between institutions and curricula with similar characteristics. As their personal circumstances and educational objectives change, students seek to have their learning, wherever and however attained, recognized by institutions where they enroll for further study. It is important for reasons of social equity and educational effectiveness, as well as the wise use of resources, for all institutions to develop reasonable and definitive policies and procedures for acceptance of transfer credit. Such policies and procedures should provide maximum consideration for the individual student who has changed institutions or objectives. It is the receiving institutions' responsibility to provide reasonable and definitive policies and procedures for determining a student's knowledge in required subject areas. All institutions have a responsibility to furnish transcripts and other documents necessary for a receiving institution to judge the quality and quantity of students' work. Institutions also have a responsibility to advise the student that the work reflected on the transcript may or may not be accepted by a receiving institution.

INTERINSTITUTIONAL TRANSFER OF CREDIT

Transfer of credit from one institution to another involves at least three considerations:

(1) the educational quality of the institution from which the student transfers

(2) the comparability of the nature, content, and level of credit earned to that offered by the receiving institution

(3) the appropriateness and applicability of the credit earned to the programs offered by the receiving institution, in light of the student's educational goals.

Accredited Institutions

Accreditation speaks primarily to the first of these considerations, serving as the basic indicator that an institution meets certain minimum standards. Users of accreditation are urged to give careful attention to the accreditation conferred by accrediting bodies recognized by the Council on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation (CORPA). CORPA has a formal process of recognition which requires that all accrediting bodies so recognized must meet the same standards. Under these standards, CORPA has recognized a number of accrediting bodies, including:

(1) regional accrediting commissions (which historically accredited the more traditional colleges and universities but which now accredit proprietary, vocational-technical, and single-purpose institutions as well)

(2) national accrediting bodies that accredit various kinds of specialized institutions

(3) certain professional organizations that accredit freestanding professional schools, in addition to programs within multipurpose institutions.

Although accrediting agencies vary in the ways they are organized and in their statements of scope and mission, all accrediting bodies that meet CORPA's standards for recognition function to assure that the institutions or programs they accredit have met generally accepted minimum standards for accreditation.

Accreditation affords reason for confidence in an institution's or a program's purposes, in the appropriateness of its resources and plans for carrying out these purposes, and in its effectiveness in accomplishing its goals, insofar as these things can be judged. Accreditation speaks to the probability, but does not guarantee, that students have met acceptable standards of educational accomplishment.

Comparability and Applicability

Comparability of the nature, content, and level of transfer credit and the appropriateness and applicability of the credit earned to programs offered by the receiving institution are as important in the evaluation process as the accreditation status of the institution at which the transfer credit was awarded. Since accreditation does not address these questions, this information must be obtained from catalogues and other materials and from direct contact between knowledgeable and experienced faculty and staff at both the receiving and sending institutions. When such considerations as comparability and appropriateness of credit are satisfied, however, the receiving institution should have reasonable confidence that students from accredited institutions are qualified to undertake the receiving institution's educational program.

Admissions and Degree Purposes

At some institutions there may be differences between the acceptance of credit for admission purposes and the applicability of credit for degree purposes. A receiving institution may accept previous work, place a credit value on it, and enter it on the transcript. However, that previous work, because of its nature and not its inherent quality, may be determined to have no applicability to a specific degree

to be pursued by the student.

Institutions have a responsibility to make this distinction, and its implications, clear to students before they decide to enroll. This should be a matter of full disclosure, with the best interests of the student in mind. Institutions also should make every reasonable effort to reduce the gap between credits accepted and credits applied toward an educational credential.

Unaccredited Institutions

Institutions of postsecondary education that are not accredited by CORPA-recognized accrediting bodies may lack that status for reasons unrelated to questions of quality. Such institutions, however, cannot provide a reliable, third-party assurance that they meet or exceed minimum standards. That being the case, students transferring from such institutions may encounter special problems in gaining acceptance and transferring credits to accredited institutions. Institutions admitting students from unaccredited institutions should take special steps to validate credit previously earned.

Foreign Institutions

In mosts cases, foreign institutions are chartered and authorized by their national governments, usually through a ministry of education. Although this policy provides for a standardization within a country, it does not produce useful information about comparability from one country to another. No other nation has a system comparable to voluntary accreditation. The Division of Higher Education of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is engaged in a project to develop international compacts for the acceptance of educational credentials. At the operational level, four organizations—the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE), the National Council on the Evaluation of Foreign Student Credentials (CEC), the National Association for Foreign Student Admissions (NAFSA), and the National Liaison Committee on Foreign Student Admissions (NLC)-often can assist institutions by distributing general guidelines on admission and placement of foreign students. Equivalency or placement recommendations are to be evaluated in terms of the programs and policies of the individual receiving institution.

VALIDATION OF EXTRAINSTITUTIONAL AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING FOR TRANSFER PURPOSES

Transfer-of-credit policies should encompass educational accomplishment attained in extrainstitutional settings as well as at accredited postsecondary institu-

tions. In deciding on the award of credit for extrainstitutional learning, institutions will find the services of the American Council on Education's Center for Adult Learning and Educational Credentials helpful. One of The Center's functions is to operate and foster programs to determine credit equivalencies for various modes of extrainstitutional learning. The Center maintains evaluation programs for formally structured courses offered by the military, and civilian noncollegiate sponsors such as business, corporations, government agencies, and labor unions. Evaluation services are also available for examination programs, for occupations with validated job proficiency evaluation systems, and for correspondence courses offered by schools accredited by the National Home Study Council. The results are published in a Guide series. Another resource is the General Education Development (GED) Testing Program, which provides a means for assessing high school equivalency.

For learning that has not been validated through the ACE formal credit recommendations process or through credit-by-examination programs, institutions are urged to explore the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) procedures and processes.

USES OF THIS STATEMENT

This statement has been endorsed by the two national associations most concerned with practices in the area of transfer and award of academic credit--the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, the American Council on Education, and affirmed by the Council on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation.

Institutions are encouraged to use this statement as a basis for discussions in developing or reviewing institutional policies with regard to transfer. If the statement reflects an institution's policies, that institution might want to use this publication to inform faculty, staff, and students.

It is recommended that accrediting bodies reflect the essential precepts of this statement in their criteria.

Approved by the Executive Committee, American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers November 21, 1978 and reaffirmed in 1989.

Approved by the American Council on Education/Commission on Educational Credit and Credentials December 5, 1978 and reaffirmed in 1989.

Approved by the COPA Board October 10, 1978, and affirmed by CORPA Board, March, 1994.

The American Council on Education
Center for Adult Learning and Educational Credentials
One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 250
Washington, DC 20036-1193

BEST COPY AVAILABLE